

THE
C A S E

R Between the *5*
PROPRIETORS of NEWS-PAPERS,
AND THE
Subscribing Coffee-Men,
FAIRLY STATED.

Being REMARKS on their CASE
Lately Publish'd.

WHEREIN

The False Pretences, Wild Project, and Ground-
less Complaints of that Insolent Set of Men,
are duly Examined, properly Exposed, and
thoroughly Confuted; And their Calumny
of Abuses and Impositions justly Retorted.

With a PROPOSAL for Remedying the flagrant,
scandalous, and growing Impositions of the
Coffee-Men upon the Publick.

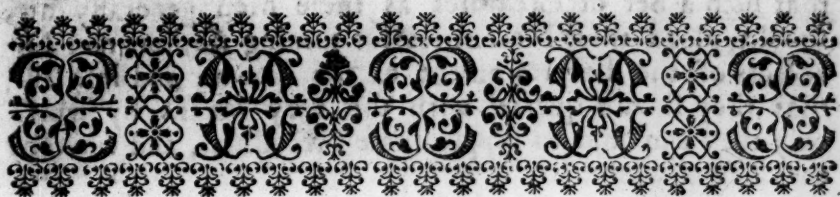
Ne Sutor ultra Crepidam.

L O N D O N,

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C. A. S. E.





The CASE between the *Proprietors of News-Papers* and the *Subscribing Coffee-Men*, fairly Stated.

IT is not easy to decide, whether the present wild Attempt of some of the Keepers of Coffee-Houses, to prescribe to the Entertainment of the Town, in the Way of Publick Intelligence, has more in it of Folly or of Arrogance; and tho' the Persons and the Project deserve to be treated with the greatest Contempt, and it may perhaps be thought sufficient Punishment for them to be permitted to pursue their chimerical Scheme, till they are convinced of the Vanity and Folly of it, by their own Expence; yet some few despicable Folks among them, who want better Business, having publish'd, as from a Coffee-Man, a stupid Pamphlet, (which all the Confederacy have since avow'd) intituled, *The Case of the Coffee-Men of London and Westminster, &c.* for which, as an early Specimen of their Intention to prevent Impositions, they tax their Readers Six-pence, it may not be amiss to bestow a little Consideration on what they alledge in Vindication of their Arrogance, and the rather, because they have long imposed on the Indulgence and Credulity of some Gentlemen with their pretended Hardships from the Publick Papers, to which, however, they principally owe their Subsistence.

They begin their Case with the grand Grievance of most of these Subscribing Gentry, by telling us, that *Necessity is the Mother of Invention*: But however true this may be, and however it may intitle the poor Men to the Commiseration

of Mankind, yet, surely, no-body would have imagin'd, that such a Set of Creatures as these Men generally are, should plead their Necessities for turning Authors and Directors of the Entertainment of the Town; and less still, that they should quarrel with the very Means by which only they can hope to supply those Necessities, and whereby they actually subsist.

It was *just and natural*, say they, *for the Coffee-Men to consider their Houses as the Staples of News*. It was just and natural, indeed, for them to think their Houses Places of Publick Resort, where Gentlemen often meet to read the Publick Papers, and from the Topicks furnish'd by them, descant on what they read, and fall into Conversation upon these Occasions, which made them consider the News-Papers as an agreeable Amusement, and Entertainment for a vacant Hour, and, in Consideration thereof, call for a Dish or a Dram, which they know they pay for far above the intrinsic Value; and many Gentlemen, who frequently meet there to go to drink better and more generous Liquor, often lay down Money at the Bar, without drinking any thing, as a Gratuity for the Entertainment they have received from the Publick Papers there taken in. And indeed, were not the News-Papers of the Day, the principal Inducement, and that those Houses are proper Places of Appointment, what Gentleman of a hundred is there, who does not drink at his own House or Chambers, far better Liquor than these People furnish? Wherefore, if it was just and natural for the Coffee-Men to consider their Houses as the *Staples of News*, it must be acknowledg'd, that the Proprietors of Papers are the true and proper *Merchants* of that *Staple*; and what follows must be exceedingly ridiculous, That it was *therefore* just and natural for the Coffee-Men to consider *Themselves as the fittest Persons in the World to furnish the Town with that Commodity*. I'll submit it to the Gentlemen who frequent Coffee-Houses, what sort of Vehicles the Keepers of most of them must make, for conveying Publick Intelligence to the World, and how capable they think they are, generally speaking, of any other Post than of the mean servile Offices proper to their Business, and taking a Message from one Gentleman to direct another to some more eligible Place of Entertainment.

They proceed, that *Necessity* (poor Men! I should pity their Necessities with all my Heart, if they would be modest, and move in their proper Sphere!) *has taught them*

them to think home, and led them to the Knowledge of their true and natural Interest ; which, it seems, some wise Heads among them have lately discover'd to be no less than to furnish the Town with News themselves ; and that, as they say, from the Stores of Intelligence in their own Hands, of which they have been the blind Possessors to this Day! — Blind Possessors indeed ! and as lame Managers they will make, no doubt ! — But let us examine what they mean by the Stores of Intelligence in their own Hands : Why it must be, that these arrogant Fellows think it not enough to make every Gentleman pay Two-pence for what they used to sell for a Penny, (of which more anon) and is not the intrinsic Value of a Half-penny, but they think themselves intitled to the Conversation and Discourse held in their Houses, and, with equal Decency and Prudence, each is to set up a Board to inform Gentlemen, that he, the very individual Coffee-Man before them, looks upon himself as a just, natural, and proper Vehicle of Publick Intelligence, and that whatever they shall think fit to talk of among themselves, he will take great Care to furnish them with next Day, for their Entertainment, at Second Hand, after it has pass'd the thick Clouds of his dull Apprehension, and the Refining Fire of his Compiler's Digestion.

But surely, if these wise Projectors were capable of judging of the just and natural Consequences of this chimerical Proposal, they would have greater Reason to apprehend, that all Gentlemen of good Sense and Solidity will rather avoid than encourage these *Boarded Houses*, which avowedly set out at the *Expence* and *Trouble* of their Customers, and, 'tis more than probable, on the Foot of *betraying private Conversation*. For what else can these inconsistent Creatures mean by the Stores of Intelligence in their Hands, than that all the *private Conversation* of their *Benefactors* lie at their *Mercy* and *Discretion* ? They can be the *actual Possessors* of no other Stores, but what they must be furnish'd with by *their own* or *Servants* hanging at Gentlemens Elbows, to *hearken* to their Discourses ; for as for any other, they are so far from supposing any such to be in *their Hands*, that their *Brother Board* is to supplicate for 'em, that every Gentleman will be pleas'd to *commence Author* for their Advantage, and furnish 'em with such Stores of Intelligence that they *have not*, and so club to his own Entertainment ! — A very pretty Scheme truly ! — A Scheme, which, in my Opinion, they'll get no-body into, but those very *vain* and *frothy* Gentlemen, as they are pleas'd modestly to

censure one considerable Class of their Customers, the Young and Gay Part of the World, whom their wise and pragmatical *Sheer-Lane Chairman* saucily recommends (*p. 29.*) to his Brethren to exclude, together with their Intelligence, from the mighty Favour of their *States* or *Books*.

It is further observable, that, according to this Proposal of theirs, if any Gentleman was to indulge them with an Article, he would lie at the Coffee-Man's Mercy, in Case of Inquiry whence it came, whether he would think it his Interest to conceal his Author, or take it upon himself and Partners; for 'tis provided, that the Compiler shall write against every Paragraph, whose Coffee-House it came from, that it may be traced to its *Fountain* (*p. 32.*); and according as the Article may be, this may subject Gentlemen to Broils and Troubles, which may possibly be attended with very bad Consequences; and all for no other End, than to serve, as it may happen, a very worthless ignorant Coffee-Man, who in the common Part of his Business is *too well* paid, and from whom neither Honour or Integrity is so much as expected, excepting in the abject Way of his Livelihood.

As to what they alledge of the mean Methods used by some of the Collectors of Home News, to get Intelligence, it may be true in Part; but then, those Fellows are easily known, and avoided, and have often been rewarded with a hearty Bastinado, which they richly deserve, when they take too great Liberties with Peoples Reputations, and abuse the Publick by false Representations: But are these merry Remarkers to be told, that this does not at all affect with Blame the Proprietors of the Papers, who are still more imposed on than the Publick, because they give a *Salary* for *better Advices*, and are often brought into odd Scrapes and Dilemmas by the Indiscretion of such Persons? But these Projectors may know, for their Comfort, that when these Collectors have been reprimanded by their Employers for their false Intelligence, they have declared, that they were imposed on by such or such a Master of a Coffee-House which they frequent, whose Plea of *Ignorance* the next Day has been their only Excuse to screen them from the Wrath of the very Collectors, they make so free with as a Body: And by this, the Fraternity will be able to guess, how far they will be obliged to the Discretion of some of their own Body, in furnishing Materials; and, of Consequence, the Publick, how far it may be entertain'd by the

the Attempts of these sage Reformers. But to resume; Even this *mean* Method, as they call it, of procuring Intelligence, with all its Inconveniences, is more tolerable to Gentlemen, than to have always at their Elbow an ignorant and impertinent Coffee-Man, or a saucy listning Waiter, against whom no Gentleman, that uses such a *News-furnishing* House, has any Defence; but must be at the Discretion of such a Representer, for what Use may be made of his *private Discourse*: For 'tis to be observed, that this Method of procuring Intelligence, is the *only* one they have in their *Hands*: They even disclaim all others, proposing *Themselves* to supply the Place of the *Eves-droppers* they arraign. — Indeed, if a Gentleman will be so kind, at the Request of these Impertinents, to turn Author, for the Pleasure of seeing himself *in Print* next Day, he may possibly, if the Compiler please, (who, after all, has Liberty, under Pretence of digesting, &c. to give it what Turn he thinks proper) stand a little better Chance than that which the dull Comprehension of an illiterate Coffee-Man will subject him to. Upon the whole, these People, who blame so freely the Collectors they intend to *supplant*, know nothing of the Arduousness of the Task they have undertaken, and seem still less aware of their own Incapacity for pursuing it; and we may appeal to the ridiculous Specimens they have already given us, how well they make good their Pretensions, and steer clear of the *Giving, Granting, and Confering, Hanging, Marrying, and Drowning* Articles, with which they make themselves so merry in others.

I come now to take Notice of the pretended Hardships of the great Number of Publick Papers upon the *Coffee-Houses*; for at last, all the Noise of their Impositions on the Publick, terminates upon this inconsiderable Body of Men only, who, with an Arrogance peculiar to them, conclude themselves *the Publick*, as all the Redress they propose to the supposed injured Publick, ends in a Calculation exclusively and avowedly designed for their own particular Advantage. And here I shall shew my Reader,

First, *What sort of Persons the Generality of Coffee-Men are; and how little Consideration they merit from the Publick.*

Secondly, *I shall undertake to prove, That the Number of News-Papers at present, is so far from being a Prejudice, that it is a Benefit to the Coffee-Houses in General.*

Thirdly,

Thirdly, *That this Project of some of the Coffee-Men, instead of lessening the pretended Hardships, will saddle the Generality with a still greater Expence than before. And,*

Fourthly, *That the Coffee-Men themselves are guilty of such gross and scandalous Impositions upon the Publick, as exceed, beyond all Comparison, the Hardships they complain of, supposing them, which they are not, real.*

And if I make out these Particulars to Satisfaction, I believe this servile Set of Subscribers will appear in the Light they deserve, and meet with the Contempt which they have so justly brought upon themselves by their Arrogance.

The first of these Articles, to wit, *what sort of People the Generality of Coffee-House Keepers are, and how little they merit from the Publick,* might appear a little invidious, if the unufferable Insolence of these Projectors had not call'd for this Vengeance upon themselves.

And here it will be found, That if we except a very few Widows and single Women, and a very few Men, render'd, by Years, incapable of a more Manly Employment, and a few Hereditary (as one may say) Coffee Houses, that are kept by the Descendants of such Persons, as we have excepted, and have the best Title to pursue their Parents Calling; the Bulk of these clamorous Regulators are the very *servilest* and most *contemprible* of that Part of Mankind which pretends to subsist by Trade.

Many of them are cast-off Valets, discarded Footmen, &c. who marrying their Fellow-Servants, turn into this Way of Business, purely because they can do nothing else; and have no other Pretensions to it at all.

Others, and indeed a more regular Sort of 'em, are bred up to it; But from what? — Why, from the Children of destitute People, who at first are taken perhaps at Eighteen-Pence, Two Shillings, or Half a Crown a Week, for the meanest Purposes, and who otherwise must have been, very probably, Japanners, and Vagabonds, till, by a supple and tractable Behaviour, they are promoted to the Dignity of Waiters, and in Process of Time, scraping together a little Money by Vails, and the Bounty of their Master's Customers, and joining themselves to a Helpmate of the same Quality, who likewise by Pains and Care has saved a little Matter in Service, by the kind Assistance of a believing Distiller, and benevolent Druggist, set up for themselves, and become rightful and regular, tho' it seems, till now, *blind* Possessors of Stores of Intelligence, &c. A

A third Sort are broken Tradesmen, undone some by Negligence, some by Misfortune, who having contracted an idle and loitering Habit of Life, make shift, by Remnants of Composition-Money, &c. to pop themselves, or Wives, or Daughters behind the Bar of a Coffee-House, and so become a worthy Part of this formidable Society: And from this motley Confederacy, a few of each Sort club together, as we see, and determine, at last, to turn Regulators, Authors, and Collectors, Eves-droppers, News-Staplers, Committee-Men, Orators, and what not?

Of such as these, excepting some worthy honest Persons, as above, are compos'd the Generality of the Coffee-Men about Town, and 'tis to such as these, (for the better Sort have disclaim'd the Project, and laugh at the Scheme and Schemists) that the Town is to owe the great Reformations of Intelligence which are now pretended to; and 'tis for the sake of *such as these*, that the Publick are press'd to come into, and encourage this wild Project.

I come now, in the *second Place*, to prove, *That the Number of News-Papers at present is so far from being a Prejudice, that 'tis even a Benefit to the Coffee-Houses, in general.*

All the considerable Coffee-Houses find this to be so true, that we need only appeal to them for the Proof of this Assertion; where, instead of thinking there are too many Papers on Foot, they find their Account in taking in, constantly, some two, some three, some four of a Sort of the Leading Papers, every Day, besides Duplicates of most of the others, and are so far from repining at the Expence, that they think it a Happiness to have Customers enough to call for 'em, despising the little mean Manner of the Generality, who impose on their Readers Patience, with the *perpetual* Response, that such and such a Paper call'd for, *is in Hand*. And they find their Account accordingly; for the Number of their Customers, and those of the best Sort, is so far from being an Objection to Gentlemen to go thither, that (knowing every one may be accommodated with the Papers of the Day) they chuse to distinguish a House, where every Gentleman, beside, is likely to meet some Friend or other. And thus the *Papers* mutually beget *Company*, and *Company* *Papers*; and the Masters of these Houses wisely consider *one* as the *Occasion* of the *other*.

Several of 'em have declared, that they cannot possibly do with less; and others of 'em have assured me, (for I have

have taken some Pains, upon the arrogant Pretensions of this Set of People, to prescribe to us our Entertainments, to inquire into the Matter) that they are always glad of the *Rise and Success* even of a *New Paper*, finding an Increase of Business on that Occasion, which over-compensates the trifling Expence of it. And the Reason's plain, for if they sell but 2 or 3 Dishes of Liquor extraordinarily, they are sure of gaining by taking it in; and one Person going away, because they don't, is the Price of the Paper lost to them; so great is the *Gain* by what they sell, and so *groundless* the *Clamour* that these genuine Sons of Stupidity make on this Occasion.

It must be confess'd, That the meaner Coffee-Houses, possibly may find the Number of Papers some Hardship upon them: But this very Hardship, is but the *Effect*; the *Cause* is certainly the Poverty of their Spirit, which makes them decline taking in all, or most of the Papers. The main Inducement to Gentlemen to use their Houses, is undoubtedly, to read the Papers of the Day, and there is no Paper publish'd, but often affords something curious that another has not: And where will they go to gratify their Curiosities, but to those Houses which constantly take in all the Papers?—I believe if these *subscribing Gentry*, to whose Trade the Number of Papers, may really, as they manage it, be an Over-Match, instead of pursuing their present wild Scheme, would turn their proposed *Board* out of the House, rather than put it up *within*, and fix it to their *Sign*, with this plain Inscription, instead of the nonsensical tedious Jargon they intend,

ALL THE PAPERS TAKEN IN HERE;

it would turn much more to their Account than That is likely to do.

This, besides, is what they *ought* to do: They *owe* it to their Customers. It was the Pretence for raising to Two-pence, what is not the intrinsic Value of a Halfpenny, especially as these Folks generally coddle and stew their Teas, &c And in one Dish at that Price, they pay for the Paper in Question.

But let us ask these impertinent Complainants of the Hardships from Papers, if most of 'em do actually take in *all* the Papers? How often have I heard an arrogant Mortal behind the Bar, with as much Lordliness as if the Fate of Papers was in his Breath, answer to a Gentleman that has inquired for a particular Paper, *We don't take it in?*—

And

And I have generally observed that Answer satisfy for the Time, but the Gentleman perhaps has never given Occasion for the Repetition of it; but, if the Paper be of any Credit, taking that for a Mark of an *obscure House*, he goes next to one, where he is likely to have his Curiosity gratified: — And yet this very Coffee-Man, who loses his Customers for want of taking in the Papers, is the most clamorous upon the Hardship of their Number, when, at the same time, he never takes half of 'em in! — What follows will fully confirm, even in their own Sense, the Truth of what I have here observed: For,

In *p. 15.* of their Case, they observe, in Terms inimitably insolent, that when once they have taken a Paper in, their *constant Benefactors expect* to see it continued; And so, say they, *if a Coffee-Man turns a foolish rascally Paper out of Doors, 'tis ten to one, but some or other of his Customers follow it, and HE SEES NO MORE OF THEM.* This makes it plain, by their own Confession, that 'tis their Interest to take in the Papers. — But here is the Hardship, that *constant Customers expect* to be obliged! What an intolerable thing this is, that a Coffee-Man (a *foolish rascally* one too, as he must be that can treat his Benefactors thus) cannot make free with a *foolish rascally Paper*, of the Merits whereof, to be sure, he is a *much better Judge* than his Customers; for, as they modestly observe, by way of Compliment to the Persons who *feed 'em*, Every Wit has his *Match*, and every Fool his *Fellow*! — Was ever any thing so impudent! — But, pray, don't *constant Customers* pay, every Day in the Week, over and over, for the Request they make? Is it not richly worth while to humour them by keeping in a Paper, which a Customer is *foolish* enough to like, tho' the *sagacious Coffee-Man* sees it has nothing in it; and that 'tis *want of Understanding* only, that makes his Customers desire to see it? — No Wonder they treat their *Elder Brethren* the present Set of *Home Collectors*, whom they design to *supplant*, in the Manner they have done, when the Persons by whose *Bounty* they *live*, are thus *abused and vilified* by them! The Town may expect from this Specimen the Treatment it would meet with, were it to suffer these rude insolent Creatures to be the *Vehicles* of their *Morning and Evening Entertainment*.

They further urge, That the News-Papers cost most of 'em 10, many 15, and some 20 *l.* a Year. — But does the principal Branch of their Trade, to which their very *Being*, as Coffee-Men, is owing, cost them no more? — We all

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know,

know, as well as they, what even the *best* of their Liquors, and Ingredients cost them, when they buy the *best*, which is *very rarely* the Case, especially of the *inferior Part* of them, *these 10 l. a Year Men*, who are the *greatest Complainants*. We know how many *Two-penny Drams* a *Quart of Spirits* will make, and how many *Two-penny Disbes* an Ounce even of *uncoddled Tea*, or *Coffee*: And I think they must be well off, if what occasions the Consumption of *such Quantities* of all these, stands 'em in no more *per Annum*.

3dly, A manifest Proof of the Third Article, (*viz. That these Projectors are augmenting, instead of lessening, the Evils they complain of, by their present Scheme*) naturally results from what has been said: They themselves acknowledge, and make it Matter of Grievance, that it is not easy to throw a Paper out that has once been receiv'd, because every *Fool* has its *Fellow*; and P. 16. they declare, that they will not offer to throw out any Paper till it has been *universally rejected*: If this be the Case, What do these *Gothamites* do? Because there are already too many Papers, they will add 12 more per Week to the Number.— For they may depend upon it, that were they all to join in a Body, (which there is no Likelihood of, because some of them, and those the most considerable, look upon the Scheme with Contempt) the Proprietors of the Publick Papers, even such as may make no extraordinary Hand of it, are too tenacious of their Property to give it up, because the Coffee-Houses refuse to take it in: — If there were no Coffee-Houses, or if the Papers were not to be taken in by them at all, do these *Wiseacres* think there would be an End of the Papers? — When *they* laid them down, would not Gentlemen that now go to the Coffee-House take 'em in themselves, and read them over a Dish of *better Liquor* than they are generally furnish'd with by *them*? Indeed it will be objected, that in that Case, Gentlemen would not take in all the Papers; no, neither do some of these Complainants; but they would some take in one, and some another, as they could *match* their *Wits*, as our well-manner'd Friends intimate, and when any Paper made a Noise by its Contents, they would in all Probability purchase that too; and all this would be so far from falling short of the present Consumption, that it would very probably exceed it.

The chief, and in a Manner only Benefit that Coffee-Houses are of to a Publick Paper, is at its *first setting out*, where they are indeed necessary to make it known; though their sordid Interest makes them take quite a contrary Method, for fear of increasing their *Expence*, tho' at the same time it would probably increase their *Trade*: 'Tis well known, that the Coffee-Men generally set themselves so resolutely against New Papers, that a Paper must by Dint of Merit,

Merit, or Dint of Impudence, (which my honest Friends, who have discover'd that every *Fool* has his *Match*, know is the same thing) make its own Way, and be call'd for repeatedly, before it can be admitted the Privilege of their Tables. It has been a disputed Point, whether the Proprietors of an *Establish'd Paper* do not receive more Hurt by Coffee-Houses than Good; and I think the Matter will not bear a Question, for the Number of *Readers* is no Profit to them, but the Number of *Buyers* only; and many a Paper would be bought by Gentlemen, if they could not so readily satisfy their Curiosities at the Coffee-House, in which Case the *Proprietor* of the Paper receives manifest Detriment, and the *Coffee-Man* only reaps the Benefit: So that these *wise Men* may observe, from this natural and just manner of Reasoning, what a Blow they may possibly give *themselves* by their *cunning Project*, in endeavouring to turn Things out of their natural Channel. 'Tis true, every now and then, a New Paper starts up, which may add to their Expence; but then, like a Ghost, it vanishes, very frequently, as soon almost as it appears: And the once sanguine, but then penitent, Proprietors sit down (as I believe our sage Brethren soon will) convinced of the Vanity of their Attempt, each a few Pieces lighter than when they begun: And this the Coffee-Men themselves have had some Experience of, to their Advantage, while the jolly sprightly *Beginners* of New Papers at first *setting out*, have sought to purchase by a *Profusion* of the *Spirits* of *Brandy*, and their own *Spirits*, the Coffee-Man's Countenance; which mean Method has given these very Men the *Air of Consequence* that they assume on the present Occasion. Another thing to be consider'd is, that for every New Paper that succeeds, the Coffee-House Charge upon some of the Old ones is diminish'd; for 'tis certain, the Number of Buyers does not much increase, but as one makes its Way, another declines, or goes off the Stage: And thus as they push one another out, the Number of Papers is not likely to be much increased, at least to any Degree equal to the *Braying* of these *sensible Animals*. I might give Instances of this with regard to the past and present State of several News-Papers, that have had strange Revolutions in my Remembrance; but as I have no Concern in any of 'em, I am not tempted to say any thing in the Praise of any one, that may be at the Expence of some other. If it be objected, That there are, however, a greater Number of them now than ever; I answer, 'Tis true, and a greater Number than the Coffee-Houses in general encourage, (and so They ought not to complain of Expence, that don't contribute to it;) and a greater Number than the Proprietors of some of 'em have perhaps Reason to wish: But then is this a Grievance to Coffee-Houses, who are paid for this very Consideration, above 100 *per Cent.* for almost every

every thing they sell; and this without *any other visible Merit in Nature?* I shall close this Article with observing, that as 'tis probable the Non-Subscribers will take in their Brethrens Paper, if it be only to contribute to the *Diversiſion* of their *Customers*, and because they will want *nothing* that their Brethren have, at the same time that they will bear away the Bell in many that our Politick Dablers have not, (which is another Point worthy the Reflection of these sagacious Projectors) so of Consequence it will, as I proposed to make appear in this Article, *augment*, instead of *diminish*, the Evil complain'd of, as to the *Generality* of the Coffee-Houses, and even to *all*, if the *Schemists* adhere to their Promise, to *throw no Papers out of their Houses, till they are universally rejected*.

I come now to the *Fourth Particular* proposed, *viz. That the Coffee-Men themselves are guilty of the most scandalous Abuses of the Publick, the Enormity of which is infinitely greater than the Hardships they complain of, from the Papers, upon themselves, even supposing (the contrary of which we have abundantly demonstrated) that their Allegations on that Head were true.*

There was a Time, within the Remembrance of most Men of any Standing in Business, that this Important Set of People made a tolerable Subsistence by selling their Coffee and Tea at One Penny *per Dish*, and their other Liquors in Proportion; and then the Business was principally in the Hands of the Wives of Men who pursued their own separate Business, and who were put into this Way as a comfortable *Reversionary Prospect*, in Case of their Husbands Death, to prevent a destitute Widowhood: But afterwards, the Price of Coffee, upon a Scarcity, being raised, they took that Opportunity to raise the Price of their Liquor one half, and sold it for Three half-pence a Dish; and then as soon as the Men began to find the Sweets of the Profit, they left off their more careful Employments to pursue this, as it gave them a lazier and less fatiguing Opportunity of Subsistence;—Just in the same Manner, to make a Comparison not *very much* below the Mark, as the Trade of *Japanning* was at first carried on by Boys and Children only; but when the multiplied *Half-pence* began to produce tolerable Opportunities for subsisting these poor Wretches, we saw at the End of every Street, a Parcel of *bulking Rascals* and *Men grown*, supplanting the *poor Children*, and with their *Stools* and their *Blacking*, perpetually soliciting your *Honour's Favour*, when they ought rather to have been beating Hemp, for the future Use and due Reward of themselves and Brother Vagabonds.

Thus the Coffee-Men went on, and got Money, at Three half-pence a Dish; but as they always lay in wait to make a *Property* of their Customers, so, when the Tax on News-Papers commenced, which obliged the Proprietors to raise

raise their Price from One Penny to Three Half-pence, (which was but merely the *Samp-Duty* Advance, tho' vast Numbers of their Sale were struck off by it) these modest People, one and all, agreed to raise their Price to *Two-pence per Dish*, tho' the *extraordinary Price* of Coffee, &c. had lately been reduc'd, which was their Pretence of raising to Three Half-pence, and one would have thought, might have been a Motive for them to have kept it at that Standard. — However, so indulgent were their Customers to them, that not considering what a vast Augmentation a Halfpenny *per Dish* would make to their Profits, or if they did consider, no doubt, expecting that no reasonable Expence should be thought much of by those People for their Entertainment, they readily came into it, and so establish'd upon themselves this *extraordinary Tax*, for the Benefit of a most undeserving Set of Men. — Here then one would have thought they might have rested, enjoying but too much the Liberty of rejecting what Papers they thought fit, and having it in their Power to prescribe as they judg'd proper, to the Taste of their Benefactors; especially when their Chocolate was indulg'd them at Three-pence. But so far were they from being satisfy'd with their exorbitant *Gains* by their *Coffee, Teas*, and other Liquors, that last Year, upon a Scarcity of Cocoa, which enhanc'd the Value of that Commodity, they rais'd the Price of that Liquor to Four-pence, and some of them even agreed lately among themselves to keep it there, but could not prevail upon the rest to countenance them in it, and so were oblig'd, to their great Regret, to reduce it again to Three-pence, tho' almost all of them have thought fit to lessen their Dishes, which makes it tantamount to Four-pence still.

These Wise Men have further laid themselves open in P. 17. of their Case, where they are pleading a Right also to *Advertisements*: They calculate, that by *their Means* a Paper passes through no less than Twenty thousand Hands in a Day; every one of these spends, at least, Two-pence for his Share; and if we take in those that drink *more than one Dish*, and also the *Evening* as well as *Morning*, and other *Parts* of the Day, this Twenty thousand may be reckon'd at Thirty thousand Two-pences, at a moderate Computation, besides the *Gill and Fine Ales*, which some Houses have a greater Call for than *Hot Liquors*; and besides the great Quantities of *Punch (Arrack, Rum, and Brandy)* which in some Houses, is more than equivalent to all the rest of their Trade put together, and in all which they reap an exorbitant Profit: Beside which, those Coffee-houses that open of a Sunday, and Sunday Evening, have an Opportunity of

of a *Seventh Day* to the Week, on which no Papers come out, and consequently produces them a clear Gain, without any extraordinary Charge at all. Exclusive of all these Articles, I say, here are Thirty thousand Two-pences collected, out of which, Twenty thousand may modestly beaverr'd to be *clear Gains*, reap'd by them from the Pains and Risque of the Proprietors of Papers, every one of which goes through, as they say, Twenty thousand Hands in a Day in Coffee-houses, which consequently diminishes the Sale, and while it contributes to such great Gains to the Coffee-men, affords no more than a poor Half-penny, exclusive of Advertisements, (which these Wretches also lay a Claim to) for defraying the Charges of Paper and Print; for every Paper sells but for Three half-pence, and *one Half-penny* goes to the Crown for *Stamps*, and *another* is the Profit of the *Mercury* and *Hawker*; and as for the Number of Advertisements which they take Notice of in the *Daily Post*, that Paper has often eight or ten Partners to fill up the large Size, which that, as also the *Daily Journal* affords to the Publick, in 3 large Columns, at the common Price, and which, by the Duty, are a Charge, and no Benefit at all to the Paper. So that the *Benefit* or *Luck*, as these Mongrels call it, is not so large as they ignorantly imagine; and as they'll soon find by their own Experience.

From this cursory State of the Matter, would any body believe, that these are the same People that clamour against the great Branch by which they live, the Charge of the News-Papers? And less still, that these *Ingrates* should take it into their Heads to *turn upon* and *circumvent* their *Benefactors*, the Proprietors of News-Papers, who, at their own great *Risque*, and some of 'em at *Expence*, furnish them with the very Entertainment that brings them the Means of such comfortable and ample Subsistence: And whose Combination in this Case is as *unnatural* as a *Rebellion* of the *Belly* or *Members* against the *Head*? — Indeed, the Extravagance of these Creatures is the less to be wondred at, when their Scheme is thoroughly consider'd; by which they propose to make a *further Property* of their *Customers*, and even of the *Conversation* held in their Houses; and accordingly form a *Demand* upon them to furnish them with *Materials* for their *new Design*: So that they evidently propose to make a *Property* of every *Article*, of every *Paper*, of every *Gentleman*, that enters their Doors. Was there ever such a modest and reasonable Pack of Projectors known? especially considering how little the Generality of them merit of the Publick, and how inconsiderable their *Expences*, *Stocks*, *Risques*, and *Beginnings* are!

I might

I might mention in this Place the *paltry Spirit* of many of 'em, notwithstanding their exorbitant Profit: The *wretched Liquors* sold by some of them: Quarrelling with those of their Profession of honest Minds, for affording *Loaf Sugar* to Coffee; their pounding *Lump Sugar* for Tea, to pass it upon their Customers for *Loaf*: The *Pay* of their *Servants*, which many of 'em, (that perhaps themselves have become *Masters* by the Bounty of Gentlemen, scrap'd together in their *Servitude*) impose upon their Customers, conditioning with them to serve for their Vails, and even some of 'em *snacking* with the poor Fellows the Benefit of their *Box* at *Christmas*: But I would not be too prolix, nor say every *little Thing* that the *mean* and *low* Subject would naturally suggest on this Occasion: Wherefore, having *detected* and *re-torted* their *scandalous Abuses*, and proved every Point I undertook, I will conclude this Article with turning a Sentence of their own upon them, as one might easily the whole stupid Pamphlet; *viz.* — "'Tis the Fate and Folly of all
 " who practise and impose on the World with Success,
 " that they never know when they are well; but by a
 " wanton Abuse of the Publick Indulgence, provoke Peo-
 " ple to fly in their Faces, rip up their Machines, and on
 " the Foundation of Common Evils, to promote and esta-
 " blish the Common Good." *Cafe, P. 3.*

And as they take Care to verify this Observation more than any Set of Men in Common Life, I cannot do better than to address the following Proposal to the Proprietors of Publick Papers, for putting a Check to the Injury they design Them, and for reforming the scandalous Impositions on the Publick; which I only offer as a rough *Plan*, to be alter'd and improv'd, as the Persons concern'd, who, no doubt, are better Judges than my self, shall think proper: But something of which seems to me to be absolutely become necessary.

I. THAT as the Attempt of these subscribing Coffee-men is calculated to injure the Proprietors of the Publick Papers, the said Proprietors, who are generally Persons of Reputation and Ability, will make it, as it is, one **COMMON CAUSE** against these Intruders, and contribute each so much *per Share*, as shall be thought sufficient to erect about Half a Dozen Coffee-houses, (to begin with) in the Neighbourhood of the most active Subscribers and Managers.

II. That these New Coffee-houses sell at Three-half Pence *per Dish*, the Liquors now usually sold for Two Pence; and for One Penny those that are sold for Three-half Pence;
 and

and Punch at One Shilling *per* Quart less ; all which may be so well afforded, that a handsome Profit will accrue, which will soon reimburse them the Money deposited.

III. That for a Distinction from the Subscribing Houses, a Board shall be affixed to their Sign with this Inscription, **ALL THE PAPERS TAKEN IN HERE**; and that the best of all Sorts of Coffee-house Liquors shall be sold there.

IV. That the sober decay'd Widows of reputable House-keepers, or the staid destitute Daughters of some honest unfortunate Families, too many of which will, doubtless, offer to the Knowledge of the Proprietors, or may be recommended by Gentlemen, who will take Pleasure to promote so charitable and laudable a Design, shall be the Persons set up in these Houses.

V. That two or three Persons be elected by the Proprietors of each Paper, to be a Committee for managing this Design to the best Advantage, and to be re-chosen every Three Months by their respective Proprietors; and who shall regulate themselves by a Majority of Votes in all their Proceedings relating to this Design: Nine of whom to be a Committee to do Business, provided there be one Proprietor of most of the Papers present.

VI. That the New Houses shall be taken in the Name, or by the Direction of some one of the Committee, that in case of Death, Mismanagement, or indiscreet Marriage, without the Consent of the Committee, whereby the Houses may suffer Detriment, they may interpose to keep up the Credit of the House: But that no Person shall be displac'd, except for wilful Negligence, disobliging Behaviour, &c. and that after three Months Notice; and the Consent of every Member of the Committee to be necessary; and even then to be allow'd the clear Produce over and above the Charges of Management of the past Trade, as a Recompence for their Trouble and Time, &c. and that they may be left in better Condition than at first.

VII. That the Liquors shall be contracted for, and sent in by the said Committee, that they may be purchas'd at the best Hand, and of unexceptionable Goodness; and that the said Committee shall inspect the Books of Account, to be kept by such Persons, and their respective Conduct, &c. as often as they shall think proper, in order to keep them from running out, &c.

VIII. That

VIII. That the Proprietors of Papers shall reimburse themselves their Expences, in the first Place, out of the clear Profits, with lawful Interest for their Money; but not 'till the Trade is so far established, as that it may be done without Prejudice to the House.

IX. That the Committee of all the Papers shall have Power from Time to Time, as they see proper, to erect new Coffee-houses in such Places as may not detriment those set up on this laudable Establishment.

X. That the Meetings of the Proprietors of Papers, &c. in relation to the Concerns thereof, shall be, as often as possible, held at those Coffee-houses, in their Turns; and 'tis not doubted, but the Goodness of the Liquors, and the Excellency of the Design, in all its Parts, will induce many others to do the like.

XI. That such Papers whose Proprietors shall not think fit to encourage this Design, if any such should be, shall be the only ones omitted in the proposed Houses.

XII. That the Persons keeping these Coffee-houses, shall not particularly interfere with regard to Advertisements, that they may be desir'd to send to the Papers; but that they shall implicitly take the Direction of the Advertiser; and in case the Choice be left to them on that Head, that they shall faithfully recommend the Paper best likely to answer the Design of the Advertiser.

I will conclude with one Observation, That so far from Abuses and Impositions, there never was a Time, when the Proprietors of Papers exerted themselves so much, with a perfect Emulation, as it were, and to their very great Expence, to entertain the Publick, than at present, and for some Time past, and of Consequence when the Clamours of these People were more groundless.

F I N I S.



